



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

REGION 10

1200 Sixth Avenue, Suite 900  
Seattle, WA 98101-3140

OFFICE OF  
WATER AND  
WATERSHEDS

The Honorable Silas C. Whitman  
Chairman  
Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee  
P.O. Box 305  
Lapwai, Idaho 83540

APR 16 2014

Dear Chairman Whitman:

On behalf of Dennis McLerran, Regional Administrator, I would like to thank you for your letter dated March 27, 2014. In your letter you ask whether the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is considering reducing the Indian General Assistance Program (GAP) funding already committed to the statewide tribal environmental capacity building effort, including the tribal fish consumption survey that the Nez Perce Tribe is planning to undertake.

As you note in your letter, EPA has been collaborating with all the Tribal governments in Idaho to strengthen tribal environmental capacity building. Part of that collaboration includes the major undertaking to assist the tribes to organize, plan, design and implement tribal fish consumption surveys. We have been and remain committed to this work. As we do this work, the EPA has a regulatory and legal obligation to manage the funding that has been allocated to support this work in a fiscally responsible manner. Consequently, we are and will continue to carefully manage the contract and contractors providing much of the technical expertise and coordination support. This entails frequent review of the work and the funding.

In summary, the EPA remains committed to partnering with the Nez Perce Tribe and the other Idaho Tribal governments engaged in this effort to complete this important work. We do not plan to reduce our commitment or the funding that has been committed. Tribal environmental capacity building is a high priority for EPA. We recognize and appreciate the exceptional commitment that the Nez Perce Tribe has made to carry out the tribal fish consumption survey. We recognize and appreciate the investment that the Nez Perce Tribe and other Tribal governments in Idaho are making to ensure a high level of tribal participation in the survey. The success of the project depends on our continued commitments, investments, and strong partnership.

Please feel free to call me if you have any questions. I can be reached at (206) 553-1906. You can also contact Mary Lou Soscia at (503) 326-5873.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Christine Psyk", is written over a horizontal line.

Christine Psyk  
Associate Director  
Office of Water & Watersheds